

NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL

November 29, 2007
MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Interagency Coordinating Council Members Present:

Ann Bingham, Co-Chair	University of Nevada, Reno, Dept. of Educational Specialties
Jerry Allen	Nevada Division of Welfare, Child Care Financing
Nora Bryan Behrens	Parent Representative – Northern Region
Yvonne Brueggert	Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center
Alice Chernich	Sunrise Hospital
Paula Crawford	Southern Nevada Early Intervention Services
Jyotikaben Bhakta for Chuck Duarte	Division of Health Care Finance and Policy
Dianne Farkas	Family to Family Connection, Las Vegas West
JoAnn Johnson	Nevada University Center for Excellence in Disabilities
Robin Kincaid	Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents
Joyce Larsen	Division of Child and Family Services, Early Childhood Mental Health
Pamela McKay	Division of Insurance
Johnette Oman	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Betty Sherwood	Parent Representative - Rural
Shannon Springer	Parent Representative – Northern Region
Sherry Waugh	Early Head Start
Myra Berkovits	Clark County School District Title I HOPE
Richard Weathermon	Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
Bodi Wallace	Parent Representative – Southern Region
Randy Figurski for Richard Whitley	Health Division

Interagency Coordinating Council Members Absent:

Molly Hayes	Nellis Child Development Center
Sheila Leslie	Assemblywoman, Nevada Legislature
Nancy Sileo	University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Special Education

Nevada State Health Division Staff Present:

Janelle Mulvenon, Bureau Chief	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Wendy Whipple, Part C Coordinator	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Brenda Bledsoe, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Cathy Robinson, Administrative Assistant	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Edie King, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Iandia Poole, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Daniel Dinnell, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Allan Mandell, Program Manager	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Diane Branson, Speech Pathologist	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Pam Young, Developmental Specialist III	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Kari Horn, Program Assistant	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Shari Fyfe, Developmental Specialist IV	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services
Terri Golish, Developmental Specialist IV	Northwest Nevada Early Intervention Services

Public/Guests Present:

Amy Culpert	Easter Seals of Southern Nevada
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CALL TO ORDER

A. Bingham, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Introductions and Announcements

Introductions were made in Reno, Las Vegas, and Elko. S. Waugh announced Head Start is very close to reauthorization. The major provisions of interest to the ICC would be the significant expansion in the bill, which includes the possibility for Head Start grantees, which are having difficulties filling their four year old slots, to convert those to Early Head Start. Another change is to the over income families; 10% of the slots were allotted in Head Start to serve children with disabilities. This reauthorization bill is awaiting the President's signature.

New ICC Parent Biographies

N. Behrens introduced herself and described how her family became involved with early intervention services. She briefly provided a background of how she became involved in the Cerebral Palsy (CP) Network, which eventually led to her being interested in participating as a member of the ICC.

B. Sherwood introduced herself and spoke of the birth of her grandson, his diagnosis, and his eventual involvement with early intervention services. She also related her experiences, as his guardian, in obtaining services for him.

S. Springer introduced herself and spoke in regards to her daughter's diagnosis, her personal search for better learning opportunities for her daughter and her involvement in community organizations dealing with autism.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

J. Larsen stated there is an error on page 6 under legislative update. The heading is "Outcomes of Legislation Related to Autism" which should reference the second paragraph not the first. The first paragraph is not specific to autism. Within the first paragraph, the sentence which contains "children four through five years of age" should read "children four through six years of age". R. Kincaid had a question on page 10 as to whether all items listed under "Items for Next Agenda" were included on this agenda. This question is specific to the agenda item she requested. W. Whipple replied the agenda item being referred to cannot be addressed because Part C does not have regulations yet to provide guidance. R. Kincaid requested that the item be added to the next agenda as it pertained to Part B of IDEA.

MOTION: To approve the minutes with the corrections as discussed.

BY: B. Wallace

SECOND: P. MacKay

VOTE: Motion Passed

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION REGARDING PERFORMANCE DATA**Bureau of Early Intervention Services Performance Budget Report**

J. Mulvenon stated M. Whitney who is with the Part C office and is responsible for managing the data for all the early intervention programs had compiled the data. She gave a brief background of what the early intervention programs are facing and how they are challenged at this time. J. Mulvenon spoke about federal requirements and how staffing vacancies are affecting the regions. She continued by explaining the hiring process and relating the challenges for the programs in this process. Also noted was that community organizations are challenged to recruit and hire their staff from a limited pool of qualified prospective applicants. In the midst of the hunt for qualified employees, referrals are continuing at the same levels as they were in FY07; growth has not stopped. This means that more children will be eligible for services statewide. In the legislative budget for the current fiscal year, there is only enough additional new money for 79 children. J. Mulvenon explained when the number of new

referrals and new eligible children are added together and then the number of children exited are subtracted, it results in 124 new children statewide being served within the first five months of the year. All programs are at capacity or exceeding capacity in providing services. She remarked it is timely that an ICC finance workgroup was created at the last ICC meeting given the current budget challenges. A proposed meeting date for the workgroup is in early January before the next ICC meeting.

Regional/State Program Performance Data

J. Mulvenon stated the reports provided are a comparison of the total number of children served from FY06 to FY07. It reflects an increase of 543 children served statewide. The statewide performance data, as of November 26 for all five programs, show they served a total of 1,977 children. The federal count day, which is December 1 of each year, reflects a growth of 457 children over last year's total of 1,520 children served. The next comparison is of the first quarter data of FY07 and FY08. In FY07, 1,725 children were served compared to FY08 of 2,261 children, which is an increase of 536 children served. The next chart showed the number of children budgeted and served on a monthly basis. This is the chart showing programs being at capacity or having exceeded capacity. The following chart reflects the 45-day timeline data, which shows 14 children did not meet the timeline. At this point in time, this number is consistent from the last quarter. The concern is as more children come into the program that the the programs will be unable to get and maintain the 45-day timeline number to no children waiting. The last data page shows the timely delivery of services and the slippage in this area due to the number of new referrals.

Y. Brueggert asked what types of services are seeing the greatest delay in delivery, especially in the north. J. Oman stated the Northwestern program is faced with trying to move to the primary service provider approach and currently the biggest wait time is in the appointment of a permanent service coordinator. There are 108 children waiting for services with 76 of those waiting over 30 days.

A discussion took place by members on the issues surrounding the state hiring process along with the looming budget cuts and how these will affect services. A. Mandell spoke on the specifics of how these issues affect the Northwestern region. The discussion turned to what the ICC could do to effect change and what the parents of the ICC could do. Parent members suggested the parent mentoring avenue to educate parents about what they can do to help in making their legislative representatives aware of the data. Y. Brueggert suggested the ICC chairs draft a letter to the Governor regarding the federal mandates to be met and that children still need services. A. Bingham asked if there were any members interested in getting together to create this draft letter. Members B. Wallace, S. Springer, Y. Brueggert, B. Sherwood volunteered. B. Wallace suggested hand delivery of the letter to the governor in the form of a presentation and stated his willingness to do this. A. Bingham stated the letter would be drafted and presented at the next meeting for ICC review and approval.

DISCUSSION AND SCHEDULING OF ICC STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

A. Bingham stated at the last meeting while discussing the bylaws it was determined that a strategic planning meeting would be beneficial. She reported contact had been made with Sharon Walsh to determine her willingness to come to Nevada to facilitate this meeting. A. Bingham and W. Whipple explained S. Walsh is an advisor to many boards on legislative issues surrounding early childhood. She is the legislative consultant for The Division of Early Childhood (DEC), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), affiliated with the Infant Toddlers Coordinator's Association (ITCA), a paid lobbyist, and a leading expert on IDEA for Part C. The date being considered for the meeting is April 17 with April 24 as a secondary choice. When the date is confirmed with S. Walsh an email will be sent confirming the date. This one-day retreat will be held as a face to face meeting in Reno at NEIS with a starting time of approximately 9:30 a.m. A planning group was formed to arrange the events for the day. Those members volunteering to participate with the planning are the co-chairs, J. Oman, B. Sherwood, P. Crawford, and B. Wallace.

BUREAU OF EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES PROGRAM MONITORING UPDATE

Northeastern Regional Program Update

Martha Schott-Bernius spoke regarding the child find activities in her region. She stated some parents are not ready to enter early intervention services and there is still work to be done with the physicians. Doctors in rural areas are sometimes reluctant to tell parents they need to seek early intervention services. She described the community events they had participated in and remarked they have been successful in getting information out to the public. She also noted the school district transitions are going well especially in Elko County, which has the largest population in the region. The training for medical providers has not been formalized or taken place. Randy Figurski stated the American Academy of Pediatrics have had a recent push to improve the process for screening and diagnosis of Autism. Information was sent to doctors showing them how to link with the developmental and autism specific screening project. He reported a few pediatricians in the northeast region have received detailed screening reports and in a few cases used the information contained in the report to do additional screenings resulting in a diagnosis for those children. M. Schott-Bernius stated cases of suspected autism have risen in this region, which is probably related to the public media.

R. Kincaid mentioned she is part of a planning committee who will be putting together a statewide conference for doctors on February 22 and 23, 2008 to educate them about children with disabilities and the needs of their families. Sponsorship is provided by Positively Kids and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC). She will forward the informational flyer to ICC members. M. Schott-Bernius spoke on the concerns of doctors not taking advantage of the early window of detection for children.

M Schott-Bernius informed the ICC that when looking at FY06 compared to FY07 there is a drop in numbers. She explained this is due to the reconfiguration of NEIS from two regions to three. She then reported the Ely office is now open and fully operational. There is a developmental specialist, physical therapist, speech therapist and a newly contracted nutritionist on staff there. The occupational therapist recently resigned. By having this office open, the travel time of the Elko developmental specialists has been reduced which now allows for more coverage with an increase in referrals but also reflects an increase in caseloads. The region has gone from serving an average of 85 children to 108. The Northeast program drove over 108,000 miles last year. M. Schott-Bernius stated the Elko office moved into their new location in October. She then related how hearing evaluations in the Ely area are a challenge. Explaining that this service is not available in this region and the families have to travel to another city to receive these services. The parent fund is used to help families get to those evaluations. However, new hearing equipment was donated from the Northwest program and the audiologist believes this equipment can be transported to Ely. This would mean evaluations could be done on a quarterly basis for the outlying areas.

M. Schott-Bernius reported the university system sponsors interns in the area of speech, social work and early childhood special education work for the Northeast program. She also noted most of the staff participate on boards and committees within Head Start, Family Resource Centers and Respite. More and more of the staff are challenged with families who have issues with mental health, drug abuse, and domestic violence making safety a concern.

Transition Data for Children Transferring from Part C to Part B Exit Data OSEP Table3

J. Oman spoke on behalf of the Northwest region stating transition is working very well. They are fortunate enough to have the Washoe County School District come on site twice a week in the Reno office. The Carson City office has a good working relationship with the school district there as well. In Fernley and Fallon, there is a good relationship and staff meet regularly at the schools. Most of the developmental staff attend the child find meetings at the school districts. Washoe School District does accept NEIS evaluations and staff provide parental information on transition. Douglas and Lyon County School districts also accept NEIS child evaluations and testing. They do, however, like to receive the physician report to go with these. The staff does prepare the families for the transition meeting, although, visiting the schools after the meeting does not always happen.

P. Crawford stated the Southern region has cooperative agreement with Clark County School District (CCSD) and all of the rural counties and has a contact person for each of those districts. The four transition specialists within Clark County are assigned specifically to do transitions for NEIS children. Both teams meet and work together toward transitioning the children into the school district program. The four CCSD transition specialists often do observations of children possibly transitioning to the school district during the Explore and Learn playgroup. The school district accepts NEIS evaluations.

M. Schott-Bernius stated Elko transitions consist of a one-on-one meeting with the school and parent. Their challenge is with late referrals. Some of the counties covered by the Northeast program do not accept NEIS evaluations.

Easter Seals of Southern Nevada (ESSN) stated their developmental specialists have just recently been trained in transition from the Part C office. They do have a Memorandum of Understanding with Clark County School District and each developmental specialist is paired with a transition specialist from the Clark County School District. The transition meeting with the family is held in the home when the child is two and a half years of age. With the parent's approval, the child find representative from the school district receives the IFSP and all of the updated evaluations from the therapists. Staff encourages the parents to meet with the school and teacher where their child will attend.

A discussion took place on how to best provide information to the school district's child find program and stress how valuable the NEIS information being provided is. Concerns regarding where and how school district evaluations are done were discussed. There were also concerns from both northern and southern regions that teachers within the districts do not get specific child information before those children attend there classes.

Experiences in Supporting Children in Daycare Centers

Shari Fyfe stated the Early Intervention Partners (EIP) program is doing training with their contracted EIP childcare centers. There are 17 contracted centers with a total of 23 children placed in those centers. These centers receive ongoing technical assistance from NEIS therapists. The trainings include inclusion, sensory issues and autism. The Children's Cabinet will now be including the NEIS program in their training booklet on a regular basis for providers wanting child care licensing credit.

P. Crawford stated at the Nellis Air Force Child Care Development Center a developmental specialist provides training for their staff. The staff shadows the developmental specialist to learn how to implement the strategies to support the IFSP. The expectation is to have all parties familiar with the child outcomes and how to incorporate that in to their daily routines. This is a model for the other daycare centers.

Amy Culpert stated ESSN has a grant through the Developmental Disabilities Council and they are providing free training in cooperation with Positively Kids. The next training for local day care providers in Las Vegas is January 23, 2008.

R. Kincaid mentioned Triangles, a program funded through the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), is a program that provides assistant to families and day care centers who have children with behavioral challenges. Triangles focuses on supporting the family by helping them find resources and offer parent trainings. These families are not necessarily in early intervention services.

M. Schott-Bernius stated in Ely and Elko the two main child care providers for children 0 to 3 are the two Early Head Start sites. The developmental specialists are in those sites often and the programs are appreciative of the help provided by NEIS.

S. Waugh stated she has noticed over the past 15 years children who have sensory integration issues have not been identified effectively in early intervention and especially in Part B. She is interested in finding out if there are ways of screening children or training providers to identify these children. If

these children are not identified early, when they enter school they have behavioral issues. A discussion took place on whether trainings by the NEIS staff for community and private providers might help.

Tribal Organization Partnerships as Related to Referrals

M. Schott-Bernius stated the northeast region is most affected by reservations. In the past, there was a staff person hired solely to travel to the colonies and reservations to establish and maintain a relationship with them. She remarked referrals are received but there is room for improvement. A couple of children from these referrals were identified and are now being served through Tribal Head Start.

T. Golish stated the Northwest does have a partnership with the tribal council. The tribal council hosts an informational conference every year and invites NEIS to attend. The conference provides an opportunity to distribute information on NEIS and talk with parents about available services. There is a partnership with tribal health due to the relationship Dr. Kinman, the NEIS pediatrician, has with the doctors.

P. Crawford stated in the South a supervisor is the liaison with the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe. At one time, the liaison participated in tribal health fairs and visited their local childcare center. However, when the tribal child care had a change of directors, they were not invited back. The new director did not believe in disability so they were not expecting children with disabilities to enter their facility. There are cultural barriers to overcome when working with the tribe but the liaison continues to make contact.

BUREAU OF EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES PROGRAM MONITORING UPDATE

B. Bledsoe gave a brief overview of the monitoring process and stated letters were provided to the program managers of the regions being monitored. She explained these letters are part of the process of revisions to the monitoring process. The comprehensive monitoring process has been changed to a comprehensive self-assessment, with assistance from Part C and then the following year of implementation of correction activities. During the OSEP verification visit, it was noted the Part C office is responsible for determining when there is a finding in a program and monitoring the correction of those findings. The date on the letter to the program is the date determining when the minimum of a year for the correction begins.

Northwestern Nevada Early Intervention Services Comprehensive Self-Assessment

B. Bledsoe announced this program underwent the full comprehensive self-assessment which is what their letter is based on. She stated the letter reflects back to the program not only the non-compliance but the regulation that was violated. This was a request from OSEP. She then explained the data and information reviewed to compile the letter.

Northeastern Nevada Early Intervention Services Six Month Report

B. Bledsoe reported this program did self-assessment last year and this report is a yearly progress report based on that self-assessment. The program submitted a report to the Part C office and it was reviewed along with the data. B. Bledsoe reported on the process taken to evaluate the program and then explained the content of the letter responding to the findings.

Southern Nevada Early Intervention Services Annual Report

I. Poole explained the findings noted in the letter to the Southern program. She commended the program for the progress they have made.

Easter Seals of Southern Nevada Six Month Report

E. King stated this report is based on the comprehensive review. The biggest challenge for this program was the turnover of staff; there was a 100% turnover. In the last six months, the program has

made tremendous improvements in all compliance areas. She proceeded to explain the data contained in the letter.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION ENDORSEMENT PROPOSED CHANGES

W. Whipple stated at a past ICC meeting a discussion took place regarding the endorsement not being required for early intervention providers. A committee was formed to draft a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services advising the ICC did not support the elimination of the endorsement. One of the strategies that came out of this was the Development Specialist (DS) series concepts, which are the personnel requirements for the series of employee classifications for the state. REM and ESSN also follow these classifications. She then explained the levels within the classifications and the supervision requirements for each. Following this, she explained the specifics of how this related to the endorsement. Noting the employee has three years to obtain the endorsement no matter at what level they are hired, there is no monetary incentive to complete the endorsement. The changes now being proposed are as follows. A DS I could enter employment without an endorsement and work on taking classes so they could auto progress to a DS II when they completes 12 credits and receive a provisional endorsement. Once a full endorsement, of 18 credits, is received the employee could auto progress to a DS III. This means there would be salary incentive to move through the series and to get their course work completed in a timely matter. W. Whipple reported there was a meeting with state personnel and requirements were added to the series specific to BEIS. She then explained personnel would like to make this series classification more generic by removing the endorsement requirement and make the recruitment announcement more specific. Personnel would like advisement to determine the amount of credits a person would have to obtain in the first year of employment to demonstrate they are working towards the endorsement and to meet their probationary period to be considered a permanent employee. The state has a one year probationary period for all new employees. If probation is not met, the employee can be terminated in their first year. Once permanent status is obtained, it is harder to terminate an employee. Additional requirements being considered are how long does the employee stay as a DS I before they must auto progress to a DS II where they must have the provisional endorsement and then to the DS III where they are fully endorsed. ICC input is being requested because this will affect the actual implementation of this series for all BEIS direct service programs. W. Whipple suggested a workgroup or advisory committee to look at these items and provide advisement to the Part C office. A. Bingham suggested the original group that worked on the previous letter could reconvene, and S. Springer volunteered to help when the workgroup is put together. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

PART C REPORTS

OSEP Verification Visit

W. Whipple reported OSEP's visit to Nevada lasted four days; two days in the North and two days in the South. OSEP did site visits to NEIS South, REM and ESSN. They did record reviews for verification on transition and 45-day timeline in all three of the southern region program locations. They also attended an all staff meeting at NEIS South. There was also an opportunity for them in the North and South to meet with supervisory staff to discuss program compliance issues and other topics. W. Whipple commented there were many participants in the stakeholder call prior to the OSEP visit and Part C had a better participation than Part B did. Now that the visit is over, OSEP has 90 days from the onsite visit to issue their letter to Nevada with their findings. W. Whipple described what OSEP specifically looked at while in Nevada. She anticipates receiving their response in December.

Transfer of Part C Office to Office of Disability Services

W. Whipple provided a brief background on why the transfer was to take place and then stated a work program was submitted to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC), which is the process outside of legislative session that state agencies use to request legislative approval for making changes. This work program was approved. The official transfer of the Part C office from the Health Division to the Office of Disability Services (ODS), which is an agency within the Director's Office of the Health and Human Services, has taken place, how the Part C office will function has not changed. W. Whipple stated she will now report to Todd Butterworth in ODS and Part C staff will report to her. The biggest

difference will be that BEIS will now be a vendor to Part C in the same way as REM and ESSN are vendors. The Part C office has not physically moved and there is no current plan to relocate the office. The Health Division has retained a portion of the federal grant and a portion has moved to budget 3276. Since not all of the Part C funding transferred in the work program, the Part C office will be working with the Health Division as it relates to expenditures and monitoring of the funds. Eventually the entire grant will move to ODS and the Health Division will receive 70% for direct services.

Complaint Investigations

E. King stated during the OSEP visit discussions related to the general supervision component, which includes complaint and resolution took place. Part C was informed that IDEA does not include provisions for Part C to make the final complaint report available to the ICC. W. Whipple elaborated by stating OSEP noted it is prohibited and explained their position. The only report documented under IDEA to have public dissemination is a due process report. E. King remarked a complaint log has always been kept and this log will be expanded and will be used to inform the ICC of any complaints received. So far this year, there were only two complaints that have come to investigation. E. King explained the information contained on the log.

Revised By-Laws

A. Bingham stated the by-laws are with the attorney general's office and when they are returned they will be disseminated to all ICC members.

STANDING ICC COMMITTEES

Family Support Resource Committee (FSRC)

- Biennium Parent Conference Proposal

Y. Brueggert reported they have not met. B. Wallace suggested that Shannon Springer be nominated as the chairperson of the FSRC. S. Spring accepted the nomination and a motion was made.

Motion: To nominate Shannon Springer as the chairperson of the FSRC.
By: B. Wallace
Seconded: Y. Brueggert
Vote: Motion Carried

General comments from members who attended the Biennium Parent Conference were made with the consensus being that it went very well. It was a good opportunity for families to network, speakers provided great presentations, and with child care provided, parents had the opportunity to attend. There were 280 registered participants. The parents who attended found it to be very informative. R. Kincaid provided an overview of the facility and reported the committee learned a lot from this first conference. She stated conference evaluations were provided and many were returned. These will be available for anyone who would like to see them. R. Kincaid thanked the ICC members for their support and gave kudos to all of who participated or sponsored the conference.

Child Find Committee (CFC)

B. Bledsoe stated the committee would be reconvening in January. The Spanish version of the Child Find poster is available and being distributed.

ICC Parent Representative Meeting

No discussion or action was taken on this agenda item.

CHAIRMAN/MEMBER ITEMS

Schedule Future Meetings

- January 10, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. in Las Vegas via Videoconference— Locations: NEIS 1161 S. Valley View, Las Vegas, and NEIS, 2667 Enterprise Road, Reno.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Autism Screening Project
- Annual Report
- OSEP Part B Medicaid Funding Letter

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marissa Reynolds introduced herself and her son Joshua. She stated she has lived in Las Vegas for 17 years and her son is 17 months old. She related that her purpose in attending the meeting is to share her story as a way of getting help with services and help for other parents to have clarity in what they need to do after having this thrust upon them in the hospital. She described the challenges in getting services for her son, the disconnect between the doctors and nurses and parents, and the lack of resource information provided to new parents of children with disabilities.

ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair A. Bingham adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.